

EXHIBITION
DU 9 JUIN AU 26 AOÛT 2018

*TRAVERSÉE
DES ÉTATS*
STÉPHANIE SAADÉ

PRESS KIT



PARC  **SAINT LÉGER**
CENTRE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN

"I do not paint the being, I paint the passage."
Michel de Montaigne, *Essays, Book III, 1588*

Like an echo of Stéphanie Saadé's practice, this quotation from Montaigne accompanies the selection of works that was made for her solo show "Traversée des États" (Crossing States). The show highlights the index-like character of her work, the constancy of the process, and the measure of how space-time evolves. Her body of work proceeds essentially by transposition, displacement, and metaphor to explore the connections between the private and the universal. A bit like a land surveyor, the artist measures her favorite journeys, the time that exists between autobiographical events and history, or the impossible meeting of the past and the present. From this poetics of intimacy, she not only recreates her personal history and the history of Lebanon, but also plays on temporal and geographic mismatches in order to spark a feeling of estrangement before her personal environment.

Saadé's works are hints or traces that point up the heuristic effect of distance. The artist thus puts the viewer in the situation of the archeologist, viewing the pieces like riddles that she or he cannot identify directly. She regularly uses this distancing process to question what is seen and what is known, and thus to underscore the idea of impermanence and incompleteness. This pulling back, however, isn't expressed in a subjective way since she integrates in her work measuring tools that are perfectly objective. With her piece entitled *Elastic Distance* (2017), the artist shows us in real time the physical distance that separates her from the exhibition venue using a cellphone and a geolocation app. At the same time this distance is transformed into a constant link with the current show. The installation called *Building A Home With Time* (2016-2018) reproduces the dimensions of Saadé's room as a child, using 2832 bricks, the quantity here corresponding to the number of days the artist spent living through the Lebanese Civil War. By being shifted elsewhere, this concrete space becomes a metaphor of the protected and privileged space that is the time of childhood. Akin to an oxymoron, this process could be understood as a way humans have of mastering their fate. But this practice is also found in a form of bricolage and in particular in the series of works to which she has given the collective title *Re-Enactment*. These assemblages akin to assisted readymades are composed from materials the artist has withdrawn from day-to-day reality to

underscore a poetry of disuse. They seem to work against the oblivion surrounding these ordinary objects but above all the oblivion of the situations in which they were initially found. Once again, through an act of transposing, the artist invites us to reevaluate our point of view and go beyond appearances to aim for a deeper understanding of reality.

Geographic displacement plays an important role in Saadé's work; it may even be its foundation. With *Nostalgic Geography* (2013), the artist brings together foreign trajectories and temporalities side by side in one and the same space. She has inlaid a detail of a map of Lebanon with a metal line that reproduces the route she often took through the streets of Paris during her studies. For *A Map of Good Memories* (2015), she gathers twenty of her favorite routes to form a kind of sentimental territory that viewers may go over themselves. Realized in gold leaf, this autobiographical map becomes a reflective surface that enables other lives to be mirrored there while emphasizing the impossible meeting of the present and the past. As for gold, a material the artist frequently uses, it seems to function like an element of permanence that makes it possible to freeze fleeting states. Thus, with an economy of means, all of Stéphanie Saadé's work invites us to explore notions of settlement and displacement.

Catherine Pavlovic

PORTRAIT OF A LAKE

2017

Print on natural fabric, hemp strings
200x300cm

Portrait of a Lake consists in a suspended piece of map. It shows us the outlines of a lake and its surrounding grounds, now hanging above us. As water pours on it, the representation of the lake, dating back from 1938, becomes humid again; the lake is reactivated. As it crosses the representation of the lake, water becomes water from the lake. Dripping down onto the floor, it slowly draws the outlines of the lake anew; A self-portrait, drawn by the lake itself. Yammoune Lake is a "pull-apart": a void constituted



Courtesy the artist, Sharjah Art Foundation and Akinci, Anne Barrault, Grey Noise and Marfa' galleries

A MAP OF GOOD MEMORIES

2015

24-carat gold leaf on floor
300x150 cm

In A Map of Good Memories, the artist remembered twenty good memories, related to her life in Lebanon, dating from her childhood to the present time. She retraced these trajectories of going to see beloved people and going to beloved places, and assembled them, respecting their scale and orientation, until they formed a closed shape. Relating to different moments of the past, and to different geographical locations, they enclose an intimate, sentimental territory, drawing the outlines of a geographical self-portrait.



Courtesy the artist, Ashkal Alwan, Akinci, Anne Barrault, Grey Noise and Marfa' galleries
Photo: Marco Pinarelli

PARADISE IN PROCESS

2016-2018

Noyaux et pépins des fruits mangés

Pips and stones of fruits, eaten by Stéphanie Saadé since the first exhibition of this work, are displayed chronologically on the floor.



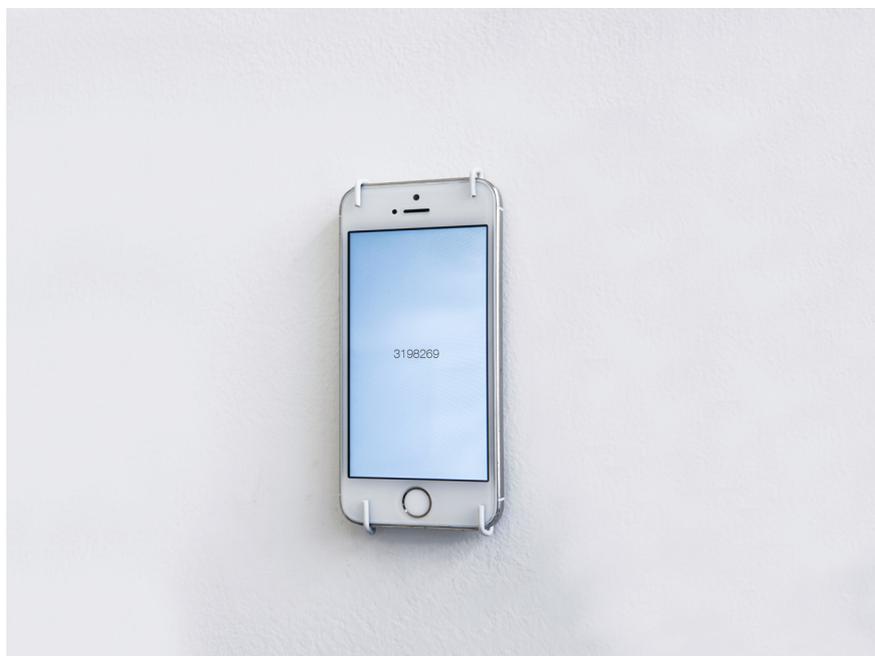
Courtesy the artist, Akinci, Anne Barrault, Grey Noise and Marfa' galleries
Photo: Gert van Rooij

ELASTIC DISTANCE

2017

Program, mobile phone

On a mobile phone screen, an ever-changing number, corresponding to the distance between the artist and her exhibition, is displayed.



Courtesy the artist and Marfa' Projects

RE-ENACTMENT LB/ CHANDELIER

2012

Broken chandelier, economic bulb "plum blossom"
60x60x100cm.

Re-Enactment is centred around objects fabricated by others, that the artist reproduces. Encountered by chance in different places, the chosen objects escape standardization. They have been conceived according to a strange logic, different from the artist's own logic. Through the process of reproduction, this foreign logic is understood and appropriated. The re-created objects surpass practicality. They access new layers of meaning, and raise questions about the cultural aesthetic they are the results of, or not. *Re-Enactment* generates a slow collection of unimportant, neglected objects, which quickly disappear otherwise. Their lives become longer.



Courtesy the artist and Anne Barrault, Akinci, Grey Noise and Marfa' galleries

NOSTALGIC GEOGRAPHY

2013

Printed map, mirror stainless steel track,
83x83cm.

A familiar trajectory, regularly undertaken by the artist when she lived in Paris, is transposed onto the map of Lebanon. A number of obstacles prevent the Parisian path to be crossed : it is interrupted by a river, buildings, or the absence of streets. By coincidence, the end point on the new map is located very close to the place where the artist lived as a child.



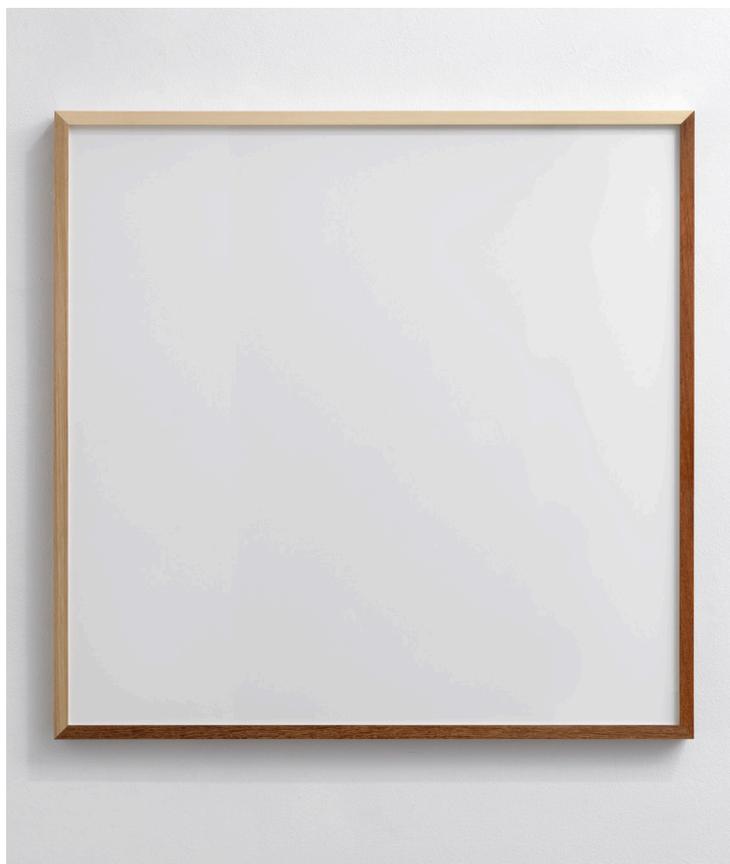
Courtesy the artist and Anne Barrault, Akinci, Grey Noise and Marfa' galleries

THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE WORLD

2015

Northern wood, southern wood, Eastern wood,
Western wood, paper
90x90cm

An empty frame composed of four different type
of wood, originating from the North, the South,
the East and the West.



Courtesy the artist and Anne Barrault, Akinci, Grey Noise and
Marfa' galleries
Photo: Gert Jan van Rooij

FAUX-JUMEAUX

2014

Natural white rose, artificial white rose, vase
15x30cm

A natural rose and its plastic imitation cohabit
in the same vase. As the days pass by, the
difference between them becomes an evidence.



Courtesy the artist and Anne Barrault, Akinci, Grey Noise and
Marfa' galleries
Photo: Romy Finke

RELATED

JUNE –
AUGUST 2018

PROGRAM

CONVERSATIONS

Sunday 10 June, 4pm
WITH STÉPHANIE SAADÉ

Sunday 1 July, 4pm
WITH CHRISTIANE PIERDET
President of the association CIMADE

Sunday 22 July, 4pm
WITH ACHILLE WARNANT
Geographer et sociologist

EVENTS

Sundays 24 June, 29 July and 26 August, 4pm
GET-TOGETHERS IN THE EXHIBITION

FAMILY WORKSHOP

Sunday 8 July, 3pm
GUIDED TOUR FOLLOWED BY A
WORKSHOP AND A SNACK
Free, reservation required.
5 years old and older.

EVENTS

Thursday 14 June, 6pm
at the bookshop Le Cyprès, Nevers
WITH DARINA AL JOUNDI

Writer and actress
Reading of selected texts related to the exhibition

Friday 15 June, 11am
WITH ANNA PRINCIPAUD
Artist
Public experimentation of Les lignes (promenade), collective perambulation mapping the trajectories.

Thursday 21 June, 2pm-7pm
WITH SUR-MESURE
Collective of urban planners
Creation of Subjective Maps of inhabited, daily experienced or desired territories.
Free, reservation required.

WORKSHOP FOR TEENS

Monday 9 July, 3pm
WITH LILIAN AKEMI
Musician
Discovery of the corporal music.
Free, reservation required.

WORKSHOPS

Saturday 7 July, 10am-5pm
WRITING WORKSHOP
WITH PIERRE BASTIDE
Free writing about the works in the exhibition.
Free, reservation required.

PRACTICAL AND THEMATIC WORKSHOPS
Free, reservation required.

As part of it, three workshops will be held:

Saturday 16 June, 4pm-6pm
Thinking about autobiographic type of writings.

Saturday 21 July, 4pm-6pm
Initiation to the art of engraving, about the notions of memory and History.

Saturday 25 Août, 4pm-6pm
Observations of spaces and environments in relation to the body measurement.

Exposition du 9 juin au 26 août 2018
Ouverture du mardi au dimanche, de 14h à 19h et sur rendez-vous
Entrée libre (fermeture le 14 juillet 2018) Cover image: Stéphanie Saadé, *Nostalgic Geography*, 2013.

Press: Juliette Tixier
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A free shuttle will run between Paris and the venue on the day of the opening:
Departure: 2.00 pm, Paris (Denfert-Rochereau)
Return: 9.00 pm, Pougues-les-Eaux
Reservation required: +33 (0)3 86 90 96 60
or with Juliette Tixier: juliette.tixier@parcsaintleger.fr

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et de Arts en résidence – Réseau national.